



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton  
Middle District of Florida

Tampa	Orlando	Jacksonville	Ocala	Fort Myers
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE			CONTACT: STEVE COLE	
June 28, 2010			PHONE: (813) 274-6136	
<a href="http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/flm/pr">http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/flm/pr</a>			FAX: (813) 274-6300	

## **ORLANDO COMPANY PRINCIPAL INDICTED IN \$4 MILLION WIRE FRAUD SCHEME**

Orlando, Florida - United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces the unsealing of an indictment charging Michael Burgess (68, currently of Alpharetta, Georgia), with forty-two counts of wire fraud and conspiracy to commit wire fraud, in connection with at least two real estate-related schemes involving more than \$4 million. If convicted on all counts, Burgess faces a maximum penalty of 845 years in federal prison and more than \$10 million in fines. The indictment also notifies Burgess that the United States intends to forfeit assets allegedly traceable to proceeds of the offense, including those in a Swiss bank account.

According to the indictment, Burgess was the Manager and Treasurer of Prosperity International (Prosperity), an Orlando, Florida company that claimed to be in the business of development and funding for large real estate projects. Prosperity asserted years of experience in both the domestic and international markets. Its website also boasted many successful projects securing millions of dollars for funding, which were fictitious.

Through Prosperity, both Socha International Holdings (SIH) and Plymouth Rock Studios (PRS) contracted with Burgess to secure multi-million dollar loans.

For SIH, Burgess was to obtain a \$10 million line of credit. SIH placed \$620,000

into a Prosperity escrow account for the line, of which \$500,000 was for the investment portion of the agreement and \$120,000 was Prosperity's fee. When the line of credit did not materialize, Burgess sent numerous e-mails giving excuses why the money or funds were not yet available, each one telling a different story. Burgess never secured the line of credit, and SIH was repaid only \$200,000 of the \$620,000.

For PRS, Prosperity was to loan \$550 million to the company so PRS could develop a large tract of land for the production of television and motion picture films. PRS gave Burgess a collateral deposit payment of \$3.5 million. When Burgess failed to secure the loan, PRS asked for its money back. Burgess did not return the funds.

Burgess has been arrested out of the district and is scheduled to appear before the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, in Atlanta, today.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

This case was investigated by the United States Secret Service. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney I. Randall Gold.